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PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

World demographic trends

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

Prepared in accordance with resolution 1996/2 of the Economic and Social Council, this report provides an overview of the latest demographic trends worldwide as assessed in the fifteenth round of the official United Nations population estimates and projections, the 1996 Revision. It gives information for all countries on the latest trends in population size and growth, fertility, mortality, and international migration.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The purpose of this report is to examine the size and growth of population in the world and its regions, along with the demographic components of fertility, mortality and international migration which determine those trends.

2. The presentation is based on the results of the United Nations 1996 Revision of global population and demographic estimates and projections, prepared by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (United Nations, 1996; United Nations, forthcoming 1997). As in the past Revisions, population estimates and projections are prepared for the world, the more developed regions,[1] less developed regions,[2] least developed countries,[3] six major areas,[4] 20 regions,[5] and 228 countries or areas. The population and demographic estimates presented are derived from available national data that have been evaluated and, whenever necessary, adjusted for census undercounts and under-recording of vital events. The estimates for the world, major areas, regions, and the like are aggregations from the national estimates and projections.

3. Population estimates are provided at five-year intervals from 1950 to 1995, with population projections carried out at five-year intervals from 1995 to 2050, using the component method. Assumptions are made for each country as to future trends in fertility (three variants), mortality (one variant), and international migration (usually one variant).

4. The newly announced data from the 1996 Revision broadly confirm conclusions found in the 1994 Revision - notably, slower current population growth, lower levels of fertility, more diverse trends in mortality, and increased migration flows during the first half of the 1990s than experienced in prior decades. In fact, the 1996 Revision shows that population growth fell faster, national fertility declines were broader and deeper, and migration flows were larger than previous estimates had indicated.

I. POPULATION SIZE AND GROWTH

5. At mid 1996, world population stood at 5.77 billion persons (table 1). During the preceding 12 months, population grew by 81 million persons, and annual growth is expected to remain at this level until 2000. Currently, 4.59 billion persons - 80 per cent of the world's population - live in the less developed regions. The total population size in the more developed regions is 1.18 billion.

6. Between 1990 and 1995 world population grew at 1.48 per cent per annum, significantly below the 1.72 per cent per annum at which population had been growing for the past two decades. The current population growth rate is the lowest since the Second World War and marks the resumption of the trends of declining growth rates that prevailed from the mid 1960s to the mid 1970s.

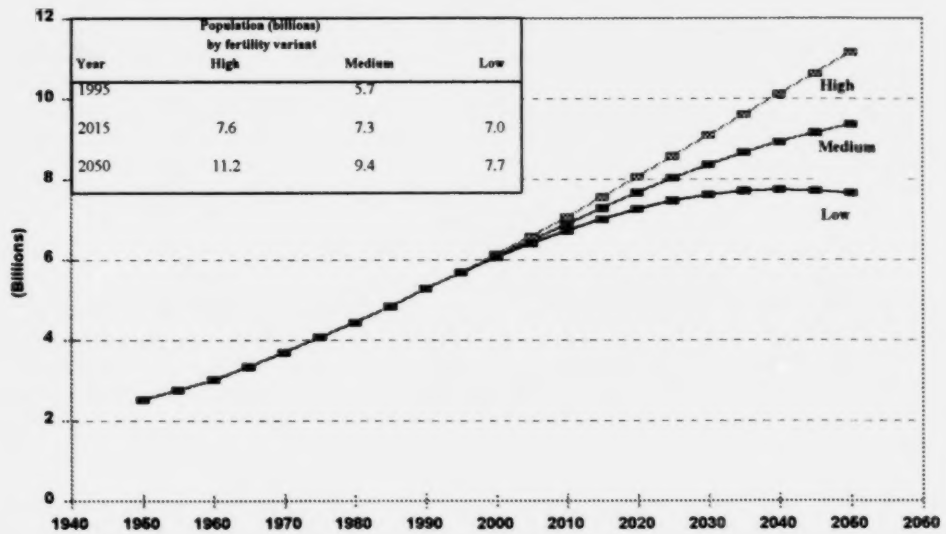
Table 1. World population, past estimates and medium-variant projections

Year	Population (billions)
1950	2.52
1990	5.28
1996	5.77
2000	6.09
2015	7.29
2025	8.04
2050	9.37

Source: World Population Prospects: The 1996 Revision (United Nations publication, forthcoming).

7. United Nations medium-variant fertility projections indicate that the population growth rate will continue declining, to 1.37 per cent per annum in 1995-2000 and to 0.45 per cent in 2045-2050. Consequently, world population is projected to reach 6.09 billion in 2000 and 9.37 billion in 2050 (fig. I).

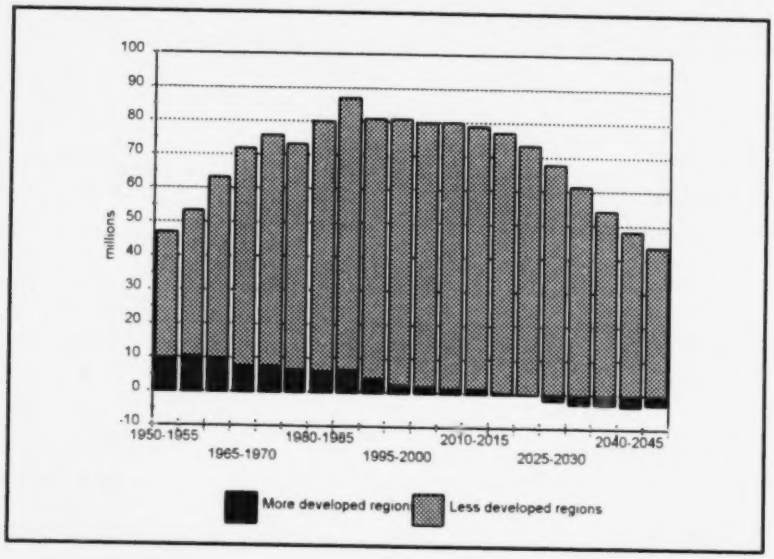
Figure I. World population growth, 1950-2050



Source: World Population Prospects: The 1996 Revision (United Nations publication, forthcoming).

8. Despite the decline in the rate of growth, the annual increment to the world population will remain steady at around 80 million per annum through 2025, and will gradually decline thereafter to 41 million between 2045 and 2050, about half of the current annual increment (fig. II).

Figure II. Average annual increase of population, 1950-2050



Source: World Population Prospects: The 1996 Revision (United Nations publication, forthcoming).

9. Between 1950 and 1996, the population of the less developed regions increased by 168 per cent, compared to an increase of 45 per cent for the more developed regions. Between 1990 and 1995, the population of the less developed regions grew at 1.77 per cent per annum. During that period, the population of the more developed regions grew at 0.40 per cent per annum (table 2). According to the medium-variant projections, the population of the less developed regions will increase by a further 79 per cent between 1996 and 2050. In contrast, the population of the more developed regions is expected to increase to 1.22 billion by 2025 and decline thereafter, so that the population in 2050 will be 1 per cent lower than in 1996.

10. The consequences of the diversity of population growth rates are perhaps best illustrated by examining the average annual increments to the total population of the more developed and the less developed regions. Between 1950 and 1955, the annual increment of world population was 47 million persons per annum. Of this total, 22 per cent originated in the more developed regions and 78 per cent in the less developed regions. By 1990-1995, 6 per cent of the

annual increment originated in the more developed regions, while 94 per cent originated in the less developed regions. By 2045-2050, the population of the more developed regions is expected to be actually declining in size, so that all of the net population increment will be accounted for by the less developed regions.

Table 2. Population growth rates of the world, more developed and less developed regions, and major areas

	1950-1955	1990-1995	2045-2050
World	1.8	1.5	0.5
More developed regions	1.2	0.4	-0.2
Less developed regions	2.1	1.8	0.6
Least developed countries	1.9	2.6	1.1
Africa	2.2	2.7	1.1
Asia	1.9	1.5	0.3
of which, China	1.9	1.1	-0.1
India	2.0	1.8	0.4
Europe	1.0	0.2	-0.4
Latin America and the Caribbean	2.7	1.7	0.5
Northern America	1.7	1.0	0.1
Oceania	2.2	1.4	0.4

Source: World Population Prospects: The 1996 Revision (United Nations publication, forthcoming).

11. The 48 least developed countries are characterized by higher fertility, higher mortality and higher population growth rates than the other countries of the less developed regions. Between 1950 and 1995, the population of the least developed countries increased by 193 per cent, compared to 160 per cent for the other countries in the less developed regions. And by 1995, 579 million persons lived in the least developed countries. Between 1990 and 1995, the population growth rate of the least developed countries was 2.6 per cent per annum, almost a full percentage point greater than that of the other countries in the less developed regions. In fact, during that period, the 48 least developed countries accounted for 17 per cent of total world population growth.

12. Population distribution and population growth differ markedly among the major areas of the world, both historically and currently. Between 1950 and 1995, the population of Africa grew from 224 million to 720 million persons. Africa's average increase of 2.6 per cent per year (221 per cent growth in total) represented the fastest rate of population growth during that 45-year period. The populations of Latin America and Asia have also grown at more than 2 per cent per annum since 1950. Growing at a rate of 2.3 per cent, the

population of Latin America rose from 166 million in 1950 to 477 million in 1995. The population of Asia has grown at 2 per cent per annum from 1950 to 1995 and totalled 3.4 billion in 1995. The population of Europe grew by 0.6 per cent per annum. Europe is the only major area whose growth rate was under 1 per cent per annum during the period 1950-1995

13. Africa continues to exhibit the most rapid current population growth rate - 2.7 per cent per annum in 1990-1995. Latin America and the Caribbean is growing a full percentage point slower (at 1.7 per cent per annum). Asia is growing at 1.5 per cent per annum, Oceania at 1.4 per cent, and Northern America at 1.0 per cent.

14. The major area where population is growing most slowly is Europe, whose population is nearly stationary. The four regions of Europe have experienced very different recent trends in population growth. Western Europe is exhibiting the highest annual population growth rate among the more developed regions - 0.56 per cent per annum during 1990-1995; the current growth rate is higher than that exhibited during 1980-1985 (0.14 per cent) or 1985-1990 (0.49 per cent). The rising growth rate for Western Europe is mainly due to increasing numbers of net migrants entering the region (particularly into Germany): 153,000 between 1980 and 1985, 2,790,000 between 1985 and 1990 and 4,208,000 between 1990 and 1995. In contrast, the population growth rate of Eastern Europe turned negative during the period 1990-1995. Those years were characterized by out-migration, sharp fertility declines and rising or stagnant mortality in a number of countries. Southern Europe has exhibited a downward trend in the rate of population growth during the past decade and a half. From an average annual rate of growth of 0.80 per cent per annum in 1975-1980, the population growth rate declined to 0.41 per cent in 1980-1985, 0.33 per cent in 1985-1990, and 0.04 per cent in 1990-1995. The dramatic decline in total fertility rate of Southern Europe from 2.3 children per woman in 1975-1980 to 1.4 children in 1990-1995 has been a key factor in the region's slow rate of growth. The population growth rate in Northern Europe stands at 0.2 per cent per annum, half the level of the growth rate recorded during 1985-1990 and similar to the level prevalent during 1975-1985. These trends are consistent with movements in fertility. Data show that fertility levels bottomed out in Northern Europe at 1.81 children per woman in 1975-1985, rose slightly to 1.84 in 1985-1990, and fell again at 1.81 in 1990-1995.

15. Of the 81 million persons added annually to world population during 1990-1995, 69 million (85 per cent) are being added in Asia and Africa. Of those two major areas, 51 million (63 per cent) are being added in Asia (13 million in China and 16 million in India).

16. The medium-variant projections indicate that the population of Africa will increase by 184 per cent between 1995 and 2050. The projected 2.1 billion people in 2050 will be almost three times the 1995 population and almost 10 times the 1950 population. The projected African population growth rate is far greater than that projected for any other major area. Between 1995 and 2050, Latin America and the Caribbean is projected to increase by 70 per cent, Asia by 58 per cent, and Northern America by 30 per cent. The population of Europe is projected to decline by 13 per cent between 1995 and 2050.

II. FERTILITY

17. Estimates for the decade 1980-1985 to 1990-1995 suggest that the average total fertility rate (TFR) in the world as a whole has continued to decline and at a somewhat faster pace during the most recent five years than in the past. During the decade, the world TFR fell by 17 per cent, from 3.6 to 3.0 births per woman. The world average, however, conceals large differences in the fertility patterns experienced in different countries and regions of the world. Indeed, during the period 1990-1995, the average TFR for the more developed region was only 1.7 births per woman, as compared to 5.5 births for the group of least developed countries (see table 3), a disparity that strongly reflects the differences in levels of social and economic development and contraceptive prevalence in those two groups of countries.

18. When considering the less developed regions alone, estimates show that fertility remains relatively high in many countries. Fertility continues to be highest in Africa. The African TFR in 1980-1985 was almost twice as high as in the other less developed regions: 6.3 births per woman, as compared to 3.8 in Latin America and 3.7 in Asia. By 1990-1995, despite a slow but continuous decline, the TFR in Africa is still estimated to be as high as 5.7, compared to 2.9 in Latin America and 2.8 in Asia. The decennial decline of 10 per cent during that period is less than half the decline in Asia and Latin America (see table 3).

19. Within Africa, large regional differences prevail. Middle, Eastern and Western Africa are the three areas with the highest fertility, where women have 6.4 births on average and where, during the past decade, fertility barely declined: 7 and 5 per cent, respectively, in Eastern and Western Africa, and 2 per cent in Middle Africa. Conversely, in Northern and Southern Africa, TFR is much lower: 4.1 and 4.2 births per woman, respectively, a decline of 27 per cent for Northern Africa (the largest reduction in the world during the decade) and 14 per cent for Southern Africa during the same time span (see table 3). Differences in modernization, economic development, social change and contraceptive use obviously underlie those different patterns of fertility change.

20. The results from a large number of recent demographic surveys now allow a better assessment and a better understanding of the fertility patterns of African countries. Whereas high African fertility in the 1970s was sustained by sub-Saharan countries where fertility exceeded 7 or even 8 births per woman, most of those countries experienced substantial fertility declines in the 1990s - notably Kenya, where a TFR of 8.0 in 1977-1978 fell to 5.4 in 1990-1993, and Rwanda, where a TFR of 8.5 in 1978-1983 fell to 6.2 in 1989-1992. However, most of the recent lower rates of sub-Saharan Africa are found in countries that started their fertility transition in the 1980s. The sharpest reductions in TFR were experienced in Northern Africa, and notably in Algeria, where TFR fell from 8.1 in 1970 to 4.4 in 1987-1992. In Egypt and Morocco, fertility also fell to levels below 5.0, and to as low as 3.3 in Tunisia in 1992. Currently, the lowest TFR in Africa, 2.3, is observed in Mauritius in 1990; the highest, 7.4, actually the third highest in the world, is in Niger.

Table 3. Estimated fertility rates and percentage change, the world, major areas and regions, 1980-1985, 1985-1990 and 1990-1995

Major area and region	Total fertility rate*			Percentage change		
	1980-1985	1985-1990	1990-1995	1980-1985 to 1985-1990	1985-1990 to 1990-1995	1980-1985 to 1990-1995
World total	3.6	3.4	3.0	-5.6	-11.8	-16.7
More developed regions	1.8	1.8	1.7	0.0	-5.6	-5.6
Less developed regions	4.1	3.8	3.3	-7.3	-13.2	-19.5
Least developed countries	6.4	6.0	5.5	-6.3	-8.3	-14.1
Africa	6.3	6.0	5.7	-4.8	-5.0	-9.5
Eastern Africa	6.9	6.7	6.4	-2.9	-4.5	-7.2
Middle Africa	6.5	6.5	6.4	0.0	-1.5	-1.5
Northern Africa	5.6	4.8	4.1	-14.3	-14.6	-26.8
Southern Africa	4.9	4.5	4.2	-8.2	-6.7	-14.3
Western Africa	6.7	6.6	6.4	-1.5	-3.0	-4.5
Asia	3.7	3.4	2.8	-8.1	-17.6	-24.3
Eastern Asia	2.5	2.4	1.9	-4.0	-20.8	-24.0
South-central Asia	4.9	4.4	3.7	-10.2	-15.9	-24.5
South-eastern Asia	4.2	3.6	3.2	-14.3	-11.1	-23.8
Western Asia	5.0	4.7	4.1	-6.0	-12.8	-18.0
Europe	1.9	1.8	1.6	-5.3	-11.1	-15.8
Eastern Europe	2.1	2.1	1.6	0.0	-23.8	-23.8
Northern Europe	1.8	1.8	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Southern Europe	1.8	1.6	1.4	-11.1	-12.5	-22.2
Western Europe	1.6	1.6	1.5	0.0	-6.3	-6.3
Latin America	3.8	3.3	2.9	-13.2	-12.1	-23.7
Caribbean	3.1	2.9	2.7	-6.5	-6.9	-12.9
Central America	4.5	3.9	3.4	-13.3	-12.8	-24.4
South America	3.7	3.2	2.8	-13.5	-12.5	-24.3
Northern America	1.8	1.9	2.0	5.6	5.3	11.1
Oceania	2.6	2.5	2.5	-3.8	0.0	-3.8

Source: World Population Prospects: The 1996 Revision (United Nations publication, forthcoming).

* Number of births per woman.

21. Asia and Latin America have experienced similar rates of fertility decline, about 24 per cent, during the past decade and reached similar TFRs in 1990-1995: 2.8 and 2.9 births per woman, respectively. The regional fertility patterns in those two major areas are, however, quite different. In Asia, the overall average is the result of relatively large regional fertility differences. The differences in TFR in 1990-1995 exceed two births per woman, ranging from a below-replacement level of 1.9 in Eastern Asia to 4.1 and 3.7 in Western Asia and South-central Asia, respectively. Differences are even larger at the individual country level: Gaza's TFR of 8.8 and Yemen's TFR of 7.6 are, respectively, the first and second highest in the world, while at the other extreme, Japan reports a TFR of 1.5. The overall decline of 24 per cent in Asia from 1980-1985 to 1990-1995 is a result of the rapid decline (24 per cent) in the highly populated/low-fertility countries of Eastern Asia (the latter decline is readily accounted for by the sharp fertility decline in China) and the

smaller (18 per cent) reduction that took place in the high-fertility countries of Western Asia (see table 3).

22. In Latin America, regional average TFR levels are comparatively more uniform. In 1990-1995, they range from 2.7 in the Caribbean to 3.4 in Central America, a difference of less than 1 birth per woman. Deviations from this range are, however, found in some Caribbean islands such as Cuba, Barbados, and the Bahamas where TFR was below population replacement level in 1990-1995. At the opposite end of the scale, Honduras, with a TFR of 4.9 in 1990-1995, currently experiences the highest fertility in the Latin American region. Central America experienced the largest fertility decline in Latin America (24 per cent) during the current decade, with a decline in TFR of from 4.5 to 3.4.

23. In the more developed regions, the situation has changed little overall. With average TFRs in the range of 1.8-1.7, the countries of the region experienced fertility below replacement level during the past decade and with only a slight decline in TFR of 6 per cent. However, major differences also exist within the more developed regions. In Europe, TFRs have continued to decline, from 1.9 to 1.6 births per woman, corresponding to a reduction of about 16 per cent during the decade, reflecting the compensating effects of fertility trends in different European regions. The average TFR remained constant in Northern Europe (at 1.8), whereas it decreased by over 20 per cent in Southern Europe, from 1.8 in 1980-1985 to 1.4 in 1990-1995. In Eastern Europe, the TFR fell from 2.1 to 1.6 in the past five years, and in Western Europe, it declined from 1.6 to 1.5 during the same period (table 3). As of 1990-1995, the lowest European TFR is in Italy, 1.2, and the highest is in Albania, 2.9.

24. In Northern America, fertility is on an upward trend and TFRs rose from 1.8 in 1980-1985 to 2.0 in 1990-1995, representing an increase of about 11 per cent. In Australia/New Zealand (the developed countries of Oceania), fertility remained constant at 1.9 during the same period, as compared to the whole of Oceania where TFRs still fluctuate at about 2.6-2.5 (table 3).

III. MORTALITY

25. Mortality is continuing to decline in most countries of the world. At the global level, life expectancy at birth reached 64.3 years in 1990-1995, an increase of 6.4 years since 1970-1975. Life expectancy at birth in the more developed regions was 74.2 years, more than 12 years higher than in the less developed regions, where it was 62.1 years, which was in turn more than 12 years higher than the average life expectancy, 49.7 years, for least developed countries (table 4). Life expectancy is highest in the major areas constituting Northern America (76.2 years), followed by Europe (72.7 years) and Oceania (72.9 years), and is lowest in Africa (51.8 years). Asia and Latin America were in-between, with life expectancies of 64.5 years and 68.5 years, respectively. In 1990-1995, there are three regions with an average life expectancy of below 50 years: Eastern Africa; Middle Africa and Western Africa. The lowest life expectancies in the world are in Rwanda (22.6 years), Sierra Leone (34.4 years), and Uganda (41 years). It is estimated that, on average, life expectancy above 75 years has been reached in Northern Europe, Southern Europe, Western Europe,

Northern America, Australia and New Zealand. Japan has the highest life expectancy in the world (79.5 years), followed by Iceland (78.8 years) and Canada (78.5 years).

Table 4. Estimates of life expectancy and infant mortality for major areas and regions of the world, 1990-1995

Major area and region	1990-1995			
	Life expectancy			Infant mortality rate
	Both sexes	Male	Female	
World	64.3	62.2	66.5	62
More developed regions	74.2	70.4	78.0	11
Less developed regions	62.1	60.6	63.7	68
Least developed countries	49.7	48.7	50.8	109
Africa	51.8	50.4	53.3	94
Eastern Africa	46.7	45.4	48.0	108
Middle Africa	51.0	49.3	52.7	97
Northern Africa	62.1	60.8	63.4	67
Southern Africa	62.1	59.3	64.9	55
Western Africa	49.5	48.0	51.1	98
Asia	64.5	63.2	66.0	62
Eastern Asia	69.7	67.6	71.9	41
South-central Asia	60.4	59.9	60.8	78
South-eastern Asia	63.7	61.7	65.6	54
Western Asia	66.3	64.4	68.4	60
Europe	72.7	68.5	76.9	13
Eastern Europe	68.2	63.0	73.6	19
Northern Europe	75.8	72.8	78.8	7
Southern Europe	76.0	72.7	79.3	11
Western Europe	76.7	73.2	80.2	7
Latin America	68.5	65.3	71.8	40
Caribbean	68.5	66.4	70.8	43
Central America	70.5	67.6	73.4	37
South America	67.8	64.4	71.4	41
Northern America	76.2	72.8	79.5	9
Oceania[a]	72.9	70.3	75.6	26
Australia/New Zealand	77.4	74.5	80.3	7

Source: World Population Prospects: The 1996 Revision (United Nations publication, forthcoming).

[a] Includes Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

26. The gap in life expectancy at birth between Eastern, Middle and Western Africa, on the one hand, and Northern and Southern Africa, on the other, has increased over the past 20 years. The former regions have registered only a 2-7-year increase in life expectancy over the 20-year period, whereas in Northern and Southern Africa, life expectancy rose by about 10 years over the period. Eastern, Middle and Western Africa have been worst hit by the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) epidemic, which along with war and its effects, accounts in part for the widening gap in life expectancy.

27. In the regions of Europe, life expectancy increased by about 3-5 years between 1970-1975 and 1990-1995, except in Eastern Europe where life expectancy declined by about a year between 1970-1975 and 1990-1995, from 69.4 years in 1970-1975 to 68.2 years in 1990-1995. Already by 1980-1985 a decline in life expectancy to 69 years was evident. These reductions can be largely attributed to an increase in death rates from cardiovascular diseases (World Bank, 1993). Between 1989 and 1993 a worsening of the situation was observed, as death rates from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, digestive diseases, infectious diseases and external causes, including suicides and accidents, all increased (UNICEF, 1994). The worst affected have been men between the ages of 20 and 59 years.

28. Women can be expected, on average, to live about four years longer than men. For the world as a whole, life expectancy for men is 62.2 years while that for women is 66.5 years (table 4). In the more developed regions, this male/female disparity is as high as 7.6 years, whereas in the less developed regions, women live three years longer than men. In most major areas of the world, the gap between male and female life expectancy increased or stayed the same between 1970-1975 and 1990-1995. In Northern America, however, female life expectancy improved by four years over the past two decades while male life expectancy improved by five years, thereby decreasing the male/female gap from 7.7 years to 6.7 years. The male/female gap also slightly decreased in Africa, from 3.1 to 2.9 years, and in Oceania, from 5.4 to 5.3.

29. South-central Asia has the lowest sex differential in life expectancy - male life expectancy is less than one year lower than female life expectancy. Male life expectancy in that region was 50.8 years in 1970-1975, 1.2 years higher than that for females at the time. Over the past 20 years, however, women have made greater improvements in life expectancy than men; by 1990-1995, female life expectancy was 0.9 years higher. Eastern Europe has the highest sex differential in life expectancy. Women in Eastern Europe with a life expectancy of 73.6 years in 1990-1995 can expect to live 10.6 years longer than men, a differential that increased from 8.6 years in 1970-1975. This widening gap is caused mainly by a decline in male life expectancy, from 64.8 years in 1970-1975 to 63.0 years in 1990-1995, whereas female life expectancy increased from 73.4 years to 73.6 years over the same period.

30. The infant mortality rate for the world as a whole was estimated to be 62 deaths per 1,000 births in 1990-1995 (table 4). In the more developed regions, the infant mortality rate was 11 per thousand, but the corresponding rate is more than six times as large, 68 per 1,000 births, in the less developed regions. Although the difference in infant mortality rates between the more developed and the less developed regions has declined from 83 points in 1970-1975 to 57 in 1990-1995, the ratio of infant mortality in less developed

regions to that in the more developed regions has increased from about 5:1 in 1970-1975 to almost 6:1 in 1980-1985 and to slightly more than 6:1 in 1990-1995.

31. During 1990-1995 infant mortality is estimated to be above 60 in two major areas: Africa, with a rate of 94 deaths per 1,000 live births, and Asia, with 62 per 1,000 live births. Infant mortality rates were on average greater than 90 per 1,000 live births in all of the regions of Africa, except for Southern Africa. At the other extreme, infant mortality rates were below 10 per 1,000 in Northern Europe and Western Europe, Northern America, and Australia/New Zealand.

32. The average infant mortality rate for Africa as a whole was the highest in the world during 1990-1995. Although important progress has been made in the reduction of childhood mortality rates in Africa over the past two decades - the average infant mortality rate fell by 36 infant deaths per 1,000 births from 1970-1975 to 1990-1995 - the largest absolute decrease among all major areas in the world occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean, where the average infant mortality rate fell by 40 infant deaths per 1,000 births from 1970-1975 to 1990-1995. Most notable also is the decline in Northern Africa where infant mortality fell from 132 to 67 deaths per 1,000 births. However, there are some countries in the world where infant mortality has remained virtually stagnant or has even increased, such as Liberia, Iraq, Uganda, Sierra Leone and Armenia.

33. According to World Health Organization (WHO) reports, Africa is still the major area most affected by the AIDS epidemic (Mertens and others, 1995). As of late 1994, nearly two thirds (about 11 million adults) of all cumulative cases of HIV infection have occurred in Africa. However, the epidemic is expanding rapidly in some parts of South and South-eastern Asia, and the annual number of new infections in Asia is expected to surpass that of Africa if the current rate of infection continues. WHO estimates that there were more than 3 million AIDS cases as of the end of 1994 in Africa, constituting more than 70 per cent of the total cumulative number of cases in the world. Nine per cent occurred in the United States, more than 9 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 4 per cent in Europe. Because the epidemic started relatively recently in Asia, only about 6 per cent of the AIDS cases in the world occurred in Asia.

IV. INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

34. Over the past decade, international migration has been the population component most clearly affected by the momentous changes in the world geopolitical order. In particular, the disintegration of nation States has resulted in significant population movements. Thus, the conflict that has accompanied the disintegration of some States has led to visible and substantial flows of refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons which have brought migration issues to the forefront of the international agenda. However, such developments have yet to be translated into better monitoring systems for the quantification of international migration. Consequently, the data available on recent developments are still somewhat sketchy. Indeed, even for earlier periods, the available estimates of international migration are generally partial (referring to only a few countries or regions) and lack comparability; hence the importance of having a set of comparable estimates for the world as a whole. Such estimates have now been derived for the years 1965, 1975, 1985 and

1990. Before the most recent period is considered, the nature of those global estimates and the migration trends that they reveal will be considered.

35. Estimates of the stock of international migrants present in each country of the world as of the beginning of 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1990 have been derived from information on the size of the foreign-born population (or, in some cases, the foreign population) enumerated by the censuses of different countries and from information on the number of refugees present in developing countries. At the world level, the estimates obtained indicate that the stock of international migrants increased from 75 million persons in 1965 to 120 million by 1990 (table 5). Thus, over the whole 1965-1990 period, the annual rate of growth of the migrant stock was 1.9 per cent. However, estimates of the rate of growth for intermediate periods indicate that the pace at which the world's migrant stock has been increasing has speeded up, passing from 1.2 per cent per year during 1965-1975 to 2.2 per cent during 1975-1985 and reaching 2.6 per cent over the period 1985-1990. The experience of developed and developing countries contrasts markedly. Thus, whereas the annual growth rate of the international migrant stock in developed countries increased only moderately, passing from 2.3 per cent per annum during 1965-1975 to 2.4 per cent during 1985-1990, that of the total number of migrants in the developing countries increased ninefold, rising from 0.3 per cent during 1965-1975 to 2.7 per cent during 1985-1990.

36. Despite the rapid growth in the number of international migrants in developing countries, by 1990 they accounted for only 55 per cent of the world's migrant stock, whereas developing countries accounted for 72 per cent of the world population. Consequently, the proportion of international migrants among the total population of developing countries remains low (1.6 per cent of the total). In contrast, international migrants constitute 4.1 per cent of the population of developed countries. Thus, proportionately, international migration continues to have greater numerical importance for the developed world.

37. As table 5 shows, there has been considerable variation in the growth and distribution of international migrants among the major world regions. By 1990, Europe and Northern America were host to 25 million and 24 million international migrants, respectively. In Northern America, the United States alone hosted 20 million international migrants, a number that includes the majority of the nearly 3 million undocumented migrants whose status was regularized by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. In the developing world, Asia has been hosting the largest number of migrants in the world (43 million in 1990). However, their distribution over the continent is far from being uniform. Thus, Eastern and South-eastern Asia, a region that includes China and Japan, have had relatively few international migrants (nearly 8 million), despite the fact that labour shortages in the newly industrializing economies of the region and in Japan have been fuelling increased interregional migration. According to some estimates, by the early 1990s, Japan was hosting nearly 300,000 undocumented migrants in addition to the 1 million or so foreign residents legally present in the country. Taiwan Province of China has had about 45,000 migrants in an irregular situation, whereas in the Republic of Korea a regularization drive carried out in 1992 had produced 61,000 applications. Similarly, in Malaysia 320,000 undocumented migrants applied for legalization under an amnesty programme instituted in 1992 (Stalker, 1994). Such numbers indicate that,

Table 5. Key indicators of trends in migrant stock, by region, 1965, 1975, 1985 and 1990

Region	Estimated foreign-born population (thousands)				As percentage of total population				Annual rate of change				Percentage distribution by region			
	1965	1975	1985	1990	1965	1975	1985	1990	1965-1975	1975-1985	1985-1990	1965-1990	1965	1975	1985	1990
World total	75 214	84 494	105 194	119 761	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	1.2	2.2	2.6	1.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Developed countries	30 401	38 317	47 991	54 231	3.1	3.5	4.1	4.5	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.3	40.4	45.3	45.6	45.3
Developing countries	44 813	46 177	57 203	65 530	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.6	0.3	2.1	2.7	1.5	59.6	54.7	54.4	54.7
Africa	7 952	11 178	12 527	15 631	2.5	2.7	2.3	2.5	3.4	1.1	4.4	2.7	10.6	13.2	11.9	13.1
Northern Africa	1 016	1 080	2 219	1 982	1.4	1.1	1.8	1.4	0.6	7.2	-2.3	2.7	1.4	1.3	2.1	1.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	6 936	10 099	10 308	13 649	2.9	3.2	2.5	2.8	3.8	0.2	5.6	2.7	9.2	12.0	9.8	11.4
Asia	31 429	29 662	38 731	43 018	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.4	-0.6	2.7	2.1	1.3	41.8	35.1	36.8	35.9
Eastern and South-eastern Asia	8 136	7 723	7 678	7 931	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.4	-0.5	-0.1	0.6	-0.1	10.8	9.1	7.3	6.6
China	266	305	331	346	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.8	0.9	1.0	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3
Other Eastern and South-eastern Asia	7 870	7 419	7 347	7 586	1.9	1.5	1.2	1.2	-0.6	-0.1	0.6	-0.1	10.5	8.8	7.0	6.3
South-central Asia[a]	18 610	15 565	19 243	20 782	2.8	1.9	1.8	1.8	-1.8	2.1	1.5	0.4	24.7	18.4	18.3	17.4
Western Asia	4 683	6 374	11 810	14 304	7.4	7.6	10.4	10.9	3.1	6.2	3.8	4.5	6.2	7.5	11.2	11.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	5 907	5 788	6 410	7 475	2.4	1.8	1.6	1.7	-0.2	1.0	3.1	0.9	7.9	6.9	6.1	6.2
Caribbean	532	665	832	959	2.4	2.5	2.7	2.9	2.2	2.2	2.8	2.4	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8
Central America[b]	445	427	948	2 047	0.8	0.6	1.0	1.8	-0.4	8.0	15.4	6.1	0.6	0.5	0.9	1.7
South America	4 930	4 695	4 629	4 469	3.0	2.2	1.8	1.5	-0.5	-0.1	-0.7	-0.4	6.6	5.6	4.4	3.7
Northern America	12 695	15 042	20 460	23 895	6.0	6.3	7.8	8.6	1.7	3.1	3.1	2.5	16.9	17.8	19.5	20.0
Europe and USSR (former)	14 728	19 504	22 959	25 068	2.2	2.7	3.0	3.2	2.8	1.6	1.8	2.1	19.6	23.1	21.8	20.9
Countries with economies in transition[c]	2 835	2 394	2 213	2 055	2.4	1.9	1.6	1.7	-1.7	-0.8	-1.5	-1.3	3.8	2.8	2.1	1.7
USSR (former)	140	148	156	159	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1
Other Europe	11 753	16 961	20 590	22 853	3.6	4.9	5.8	6.1	3.7	1.9	2.1	2.7	15.6	20.1	19.6	19.1
Oceania	2 502	3 319	4 106	4 675	14.4	15.6	16.9	17.8	2.8	2.1	2.6	2.5	3.3	3.9	3.9	3.9

Source: Derived from Trends in Total Migrant Stock, Rev.3, a database maintained by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat.

[a] Excluding Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

[b] Including Mexico.

[c] Including Albania, Bulgaria, the former Czechoslovakia, the former German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the former Yugoslavia, and excluding the former USSR.

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despite a reluctance to import foreign workers, the rapidly growing economies of Asia may have to do so if they are to remain competitive.

38. The largest concentration of international migrants in Asia is found in South-central Asia, particularly in India and Pakistan, where the survivors of the 1948 partition of those countries and the remaining refugees from Afghanistan largely account for the 16 million migrants in those countries. In Western Asia, the rapid increase in the migrant stock since 1975 is associated with the inflow of foreign workers to the oil-producing countries of the region whose revenues increased markedly after the oil-price rises of the 1970s. Although the pace of worker migration to Western Asia declined somewhat during the 1980s, the migrant stock in the oil-producing countries continued to grow during that decade. Despite the massive repatriations brought about by the Gulf War and its aftermath, statistics on outflows from the main countries of origin of foreign workers to Western Asia indicate that labour flows to the region have not abated during the 1990s.

39. The marked increase in the number of international migrants in Central America is the result of the civil strife and conflict that reigned in the region during the 1980s and which has since largely abated. In South America, migration, which is mostly of an interregional nature, did not result in rising migrant stock over the period considered, whereas in the Caribbean the number of international migrants, though small, showed a tendency to increase during the late 1980s.

40. In Europe, increases in the migrant stock during 1985-1990 are associated with the changes brought about by the processes that led to the end of the cold war and with the relaxation of exit controls in Eastern and Central European countries and in the former USSR. As a result of such changes, a growing number of citizens from those countries found their way to the market economy countries of Europe where they sought asylum within the context of the waning cold war or were admitted as immigrants under special categories. These categories include the Aussiedler admitted by the Federal Republic of Germany, a group constituted of persons of German descent originating in countries with economies in transition other than the former German Democratic Republic, and the Pontian Greeks, or persons of Greek descent originating mostly in the former USSR who were admitted to Greece. During 1985-1990, the Federal Republic of Germany admitted 1.1 million Aussiedler from countries in transition. Indeed, the increase in Aussiedler admissions proceeded so quickly after 1988 that once Germany was reunified, the Government imposed limits on the number to be admitted annually and embarked on projects providing persons of German descent living in countries in transition with alternatives to emigration. Also indicative of the growth of East/West migration during the 1980s was the fact that out of the 1.3 million persons filing asylum applications in market-economy countries during 1983-1989, 30 per cent originated in countries with economies in transition.

41. The breakup of the USSR increased concern about the possibilities of further migration directed to developed countries with market economies. Although large East/West flows have failed to materialize, there have nevertheless been important changes in the migration dynamics of the region, paramount among which is the growing migration directed to the Russian

Federation, as ethnic Russians move there from other successor States. In addition, flows of refugees or forced migrants between successor States experiencing ethnic conflict have been growing, and there are reports of new migration flows directed to certain Central and Eastern European countries. Thus, 35,000 citizens of the former Soviet Union, 20,000 Romanians and up to 10,000 persons from Bulgaria and the former Yugoslavia were reported to be present illegally in the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1992 (Stalker, 1994).

42. Since 1990, the major source of migrants in Europe has been the former Yugoslavia, whose dissolution has involved armed conflict in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and has led to the largest movement of war victims and internally displaced persons in Europe since the Second World War. As of mid-1994, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that the number of persons in need of protection inside the former Yugoslavia stood at 3.8 million, 2.7 million of whom were in Bosnia-Herzegovina and half a million in Croatia (United Nations, 1994). By the end of 1995, there were still 1.3 million displaced persons in the former Yugoslavia, 1.1 million of whom were in Bosnia-Herzegovina (UNHCR, 1996). In addition, several countries had provided temporary asylum to persons from the former Yugoslavia, including Austria, Germany, Hungary, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey.

43. In Africa, the increases in the migrant stock recorded during 1985-1990 are mainly attributable to the rising number of refugees in the region. In late 1995 there were an estimated 5.7 million refugees, the majority of whom were in Middle and Eastern Africa, particularly in Zaire (1.3 million) and the United Republic of Tanzania (0.9 million). Although the independence of Eritrea in 1993 and the elections in Mozambique have made possible the repatriation of refugees (90,000 in the case of Eritrea, and 1.7 million in the case of Mozambique), conflict continues to uproot and displace people. The crisis in Somalia, for instance, led to an estimated outflow of 1 million Somalis, about a quarter of whom have since returned, and to the repatriation of half a million Ethiopian refugees. The Sudan, which is reported to be hosting 840,000 refugees, is itself the source of 350,000 refugees who have found asylum in the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Kenya and Zaire (del Mundo, 1994). In addition, upheavals in Burundi, Rwanda and Togo have led to extensive population outflows, especially in the case of Rwanda, where the death of the President in April 1994 triggered ethnic violence that left thousands dead within a few weeks. Large numbers of Rwandese sought refuge in neighbouring countries, and the majority of the 300,000 Burundi refugees who had fled to Rwanda in 1993 were forced to leave. At the end of 1995, Zaire was hosting 1.1 million Rwandan refugees, and the United Republic of Tanzania a further half a million. In addition, continued civil strife in Liberia had uprooted thousands of people, 300,000 of whom were hosted by Côte d'Ivoire and a further 400,000 by Guinea.

44. The repatriation of Afghan refugees from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan led to a reduction of their numbers from 6.2 million early in 1990 to 2.3 million by the end of 1995. However, continued fighting in Afghanistan has prevented full repatriation from taking place. In addition, an agreement reached in 1993 between the Governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar paved the way for the repatriation of some 250,000 citizens of Myanmar who sought refuge in Bangladesh during 1991-1992. However, by the end of 1995 there were still 51,000 refugees from Myanmar in Bangladesh.

Notes

[1] More developed regions comprise all regions of Europe and Northern America, Australia/New Zealand and Japan.

[2] Less developed regions comprise all regions of Africa, Asia (excluding Japan), Latin America and the Caribbean, and the regions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

[3] Of the 48 least developed countries, as defined by the General Assembly as of 1995, 33 are in Africa, 9 in Asia, 1 in Latin America and 5 in Oceania. They are all found in the less developed regions.

[4] Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Northern America and Oceania.

[5] Eastern Africa, Middle Africa, Northern Africa, Southern Africa, Western Africa, Eastern Asia, South-central Asia, South-eastern Asia, Western Asia, Eastern Europe, Northern Europe, Southern Europe, Western Europe, Caribbean, Central America, South America, Australia/New Zealand, Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

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